

207

1976







*Chase, Thomas*

SKETCHES

OF THE

HARVARD  
UNIVERSITY  
LIBRARY

LIFE, CHARACTER AND TIMES

OF

PAUL JONES.

BY

THOMAS CHASE,

OF CHESTERFIELD, VA.



RICHMOND:

CHAS. H. WYNNE, PRINTER,

1859.

~~7531, 31 1/2~~ 1860 Jan 5.  
~~US 4550~~ Gift of  
~~315~~ Hannah Green, etc.  
of Boston.  
(Class of 1851)

EX-1905

BOUND. III N 20 1910

31

220289  
310-G

## PREFACE.

---

Most of the modern scribblers in biography seem to describe their subjects as differing in many respects from the great mass of mankind, and so materially different, that to imitate their virtues, or seek to compare with them in any important respect, would be downright presumption in the rising generation; and if, through envy, hate or malice, they are endeavoring "to damn one to everlasting fame," they represent him with so many bad qualities and so few or no good ones, that the reader is not warned of his own danger to become equally wicked, feeling that it would be impossible.

General Washington and many others are instances of the former, and "Tom Paine," and Napoleon Bonaparte in the hands of English biographers, are instances of the latter. This course is altogether unscriptural. The Prophet Elijah was one of the best men that ever lived, and yet "he was subject to like passions as we are;" and one can but admire the simplicity and truthfulness of Scripture biography, where the bad deeds are recorded as faithfully as the good. This course I like, and shall pursue in these Sketches. I received them not from a fanciful writer, nor from one whose prejudices or partialities would be likely to distort the facts; for my informant, though upon the whole friendly to his renowned com-

mander, seemed well aware that he had many defects of character.

My first attempt to write for the public was to get up *A Narrative of Thomas Chase, with Sketches of the celebrated Paul Jones*. At leisure moments, for several months, I would call on my grandfather, and from his own mouth take the story of his own adventures in "the times that tried men's souls," and also his knowledge of *that famous naval commander*, with whom he had somewhat an intimate acquaintance. I had nearly completed my rough manuscript, when "*The Life of Paul Jones*" was advertised in the newspapers. I soon procured a copy and read it to my grandfather. He said it was very incorrect—hardly "founded in fact;" but as it gave to his old and favorite commander as good a character upon the whole as he could in truth, and as my contemplated pamphlet would probably prove a loss to me, coming after that, he advised me to abandon the idea; so my first work never went to press. This was more than thirty years ago.

Since then I have seen many biographical sketches of Paul Jones, all about equally inconsistent with the sketches I had made, but often very contradictory the one to the other. "*The Black Buccaneer*" and "*The Red Rover*," from English authors, were in good keeping with almost every thing English; for those who are their superiors in any important respect, they seek to destroy by slander.

I have much confidence in the truth of the sketches I had thus taken from the lips of my revered ancestor, (whose name I bear,) and have very reluctantly yielded to write out the substance of them, even at this late day, for the following, with some minor reasons: First—his-



## PREFACE.

v

tory ought to be right, without regard to the prejudices or partialities of any one. Second—gentlemen, who deservedly enjoy the confidence of the public, and who can have no unworthy motive in view, have solicited, and even urged me to do it. Third, and last—being now somewhat advanced in life, if I do not very soon do it, these sketches, whether true or false, will soon become unknown with me; for, after the lapse of seventy or eighty years, I have very little hope that anything will come up, or that anything else even exists, that will tend to remove the many doubts and explain the unexplained contradictions and difficulties in the *many lives* of Paul Jones.

Let me here say, my grandfather, Thomas Chase, was born at Martha's Vineyard, the south-eastern extreme of Massachusetts, in 1753, but for more than fifty years he was a citizen of the town of Livermore, county of Oxford, and State of Maine, where he died in 1844. I therefore enjoyed his acquaintance until I was about forty years old.

But I perceive I shall be liable to censure for what will appear to be an egotistic repetition. *My grandfather* will appear conspicuous on almost every page. I can seem to find no other term less objectionable—even, as "Poor Richard" says, will not seem to help me. I must, therefore, ask the reader to excuse me, upon the ground of a lack of ingenuity and talent as a good writer, assuring him that I feel as much afflicted about it as he can.

THOMAS CHASE.

CHESTERFIELD, July, 1859.



SKETCHES  
OF THE  
LIFE, CHARACTER AND TIMES  
OF  
PAUL JONES.

---

We will speak of those worthies who fought for our freedom,  
And suffered, yet nobly they won;  
Though in dust they repose, in fond mem'ry we'll heed them,  
While the earth shall as ever wag on.

PAUL JONES was, probably, born about the year 1745; perhaps a little earlier. He first found himself with the Earl of Selkirk, a nobleman of the British Empire, near White Haven, on the west coast of the Island of Great Britain, near the confines of Scotland. He supposed himself to be of Scotch origin. He was told that his father's name was Paul—his mother's maiden name was Jones—that they both died when he was an infant, and that his mother, on her death-bed, gave him to the earl, upon the earl's promise "to bring him up and educate him." He was called John Paul, though the domestics about him not unfrequently called him a "bastard," when, from any cause, they became displeased with him. His chief business, soon as he was large enough, when not at school, was to see to and take care of his master's plate, of which he had a large and valuable set. In this matter, the earl was very rigid and exacting with him, and often chastised

him cruelly for neglect and inattention. These frequent beatings and corrections, administered in their apparent unfeeling manner, only made "John" worse, and, of course, brought upon him greater chastisement. He soon got used to it, and could bear his cruel treatment with the heroism of a martyr, but always with the secret and terrible purpose of mind, that he could and should, at some time, have his revenge. He considered his master a fiend in human shape—an overbearing and cruel aristocrat—but nothing different from the great mass of the nobility of the British Empire. The sequel will show that his thirst for vengeance against the earl extended to the entire British nation. His master gave him some education, and, probably, he would have been highly educated, had a state of good feeling existed between him and the earl. There can be very little doubt that "John's" natural disposition was very ardent—terrible, perhaps—but the manner in which he was treated the most of the time had no tendency to improve him. Such is human nature.

There were seasons of relaxation with the earl, in his cruel course with "John." This circumstance, with a hint or two from some in the neighborhood, together with his master's evident wish that he should be educated—though no one ever did, or could, claim of his master the fulfillment of the promise to his dead mother—created in John's mind a strong suspicion that he was really the natural son of the earl himself. This suspicion in the mind of the famous Paul Jones (for it always continued with him) had a wonderfully controlling influence upon his conduct, when, at last, he had an opportunity to wreak his fullest vengeance upon the "the old earl," as every one will readily see in the course of these Sketches. Where Paul Jones attended school, my revered informant did not remember, if Jones ever told him. Many circumstances he well remembered.

Jones was disliked by most of his school-fellows, and they in turn were disliked by him. He probably had the advantage of them; for I imagine he could dislike as terribly as any specimen of humanity in any age of the world. Captain Pearson, of the British frigate *Serapis*,

(accent on the second syllable,) was a school-mate with him for a time, and was conspicuous, in Jones' estimation, as one of his worst enemies. Jones had a taste and ability to learn beyond the average of his class-mates; but he had so much trouble with his mates and instructor, that, up to fourteen, he had but a meagre knowledge of even the English. His master, in his good seasons, gave him access to his library, in which were several histories of wars and naval fights. The reading of these seemed in harmony with his natural disposition, and he felt a strong desire "to go to sea." When, as nearly as he could tell, he was about fourteen years old, he was determined to know his parentage, and pressed the earl so violently, and disputed him so rashly, when told the old story, the earl lost all patience, and gave him an uncommonly bad whipping. John would stand it no longer. He swore vengeance against all nobility and the earl in particular, and taking such clothes as he pleased and a small sum of money, without the knowledge of his master, he left—"ran away." He soon found a chance to ship on board a vessel bound for Corunna, in the north of Spain. It was at this time he changed his name, dropping John and adding Jones, thus making his name "Paul Jones;" a name that he, by his own acts of desperate bravery and consummate skill, has rendered as illustrious and lasting in history as any other name of his times.

Arriving safe at Corunna, a youth though he was, he soon learned that there was an association of merchants and desperadoes who obtained their living and wealth by depredations on British commerce. This was in perfect harmony with his feelings; for, beside the wild and chivalrous adventures it might afford him, it would give him an opportunity to wreak his vengeance on the British, whom he most cordially hated through life. He engaged in this business, and for his pay was to have a small portion of the money they might make by captures. Young as he was, he was bold and reckless, and, in a few years, became conspicuous for his desperate daring, and particularly for his wonderful skill in handling a sword.

Before he was twenty years old—as nearly as he knew his age—he was offered the command of a vessel, to cruise

in the same business, with a much larger share of the profits than he had before enjoyed. This offer, of course, he most readily accepted. Captain Jones took command of this vessel. She was a sharp, rakish, clipper-built craft—a fast sailer, with no name marked upon her. She was familiarly called “The Black Buccaneer;” from which circumstance the English applied the name to Paul Jones—a name as terrible to the English as that of Napoleon Bonaparte, in proportion to the force he could bring against them.

Up to this time, and for some two or three cruises after, in his Black Buccaneer, Jones’ head quarters were at Cerunna, but soon changed to the Spanish West Indies. The crew of the Black Buccaneer were mostly Spanish and Portuguese desperadoes. But one of their names did my grandfather remember, if Captain Jones told him—this was “Joe Frederick,” a Portuguese, of whom I shall have occasion to say something more. Captain Jones had many thrilling adventures, many hair-breadth escapes, with his Black Buccaneer, but of one of which I obtained the details, and here it is: So much mischief did the Black Buccaneer inflict on British commerce, that the government instructed their cruisers on the American coast and in the West India seas to hunt him up and capture him. In pursuance of these orders, one of the British ships of war got upon his track, and a dense fog coming upon their locality, succeeded in getting close up to Captain Jones. “A breeze sprung up, the fog lifted,” and Jones saw, to his astonishment, “a British man of war,” able to sink him with a single broadside; “but a musket-shot from him”—“What ship is that?” cried the Briton—no answer. “What ship is that? Come aboard and bring your papers, or I’ll sink you in a moment,” said the Briton, very harshly. “Aha! aha!” cried Jones; “I will, soon as I can.” Getting his vessel in motion under the light breeze, he was soon hard up alongside, and jumping on board with the force of a lion, having prepared himself for the emergency, dashed below so suddenly that not a move was made to arrest him in his mad career. Proceeding directly to the magazine, and holding a lighted match in his left hand and his trusty

sword in his right, said, in terrible haste and earnestness, two or three being near by, "Tell your captain to come here in an instant, or I'll blow you all to hell." The British captain appeared in hot haste, exclaiming, "What does this mean?" "Not a word," said Jones, making such menaces with his sword as would startle a man of weak nerves. "Give me your word of honor as an English gentleman, that you will let me and my vessel and crew leave you unharmed, or you are in hell in an instant." The British captain again attempted to speak, but was stopped instantly by Jones, in a terrible tone of voice, "not a word—agree to my proposal instantly, or we are all in hell together." In the utmost consternation and terror, the Englishman exclaimed, "If I must, I will." Said Jones, "Do you give me your word of honor as an English gentleman, that I may, with my vessel and crew, leave you and get clear away without harm?" "I do," said the Briton. Said Jones, "Put up your sword, (the Englishman did it,) and go with me on deck," dropping his match, and seizing the Briton by the collar with his left hand, keeping his own good blade in his right, "and this good blade shall be the witness between us." "It shall," was the reply. They walked on deck together. Jones stepped upon his own deck and was off. He never happened to meet that captain again; and it is very likely that captain had no particular desire to see Jones again. Thus did "The Black Buccaneer" rid himself of an enemy full ten times as great in force as he was. It was no miracle—it was downright desperation. And there are very few of the human race, from its first planting on the earth, who would or could have done it. But Paul Jones could do that.

I will here give the substance of Jones' account of his method of carrying on this business. I am aware it may be said that it is Jones' story, and he was interested. True; but Jones was well aware that the English called him "a pirate," and had succeeded in making many others believe it; therefore, I regard his story as a confession, which we usually accept as truth. The object of his employers and himself was property—wealth. They killed none, unless in a fight to get the vessel, so as to help themselves of



her cargo. They took no prisoners, for they would be a trouble, though sometimes a hand or two would go with Jones from vessels he took. This was entirely voluntary; for Jones usually said to those he took, if any of them wished to go with him, they might. He sometimes scuttled and sunk vessels, when near some port where he apprehended danger, setting the crew ashore. But off at sea he injured nothing, taking only what he deemed of value to himself and employers. These depredations were strictly confined to British commerce. And said Jones, "Soon as I thought there was a chance to hurt the British more with a man of war, I wanted one, and got it as quick as I could."

About September, 1778, two years before the war broke out, Captain Jones, with his "Black Buccaneer," was cruising up the coast of these colonies, and, in the vicinity of Long Island, New York, had an encounter with a British craft that came very near taking him. Some two or three of his crew were wounded—one of his officers. The officer's wound proved fatal. He died in the vicinity of Martha's Vineyard, while still pursuing his north-east course toward Cape Cod. This island was the birth-place of my grandfather and grandmother, also of my revered father. Jones wished to bury his dead officer respectfully, and put into "Holmes' Hole," the only harbor of any note in that island. It was there and at that time my grandfather first saw that famous man, Paul Jones. Being informed that Thomas Chase was a mechanic, Jones employed him to make a coffin for his dead officer and assist at his burial. At Captain Jones' request, the good people of that part of the island turned out, and gave the deceased a Christian burial. My grandfather was at that time about twenty years old. Jones remained "on the Vineyard" several days—"went gunning" two or three times, taking my grandfather with him, who proved a better "shot" than Captain Jones. This circumstance it was that induced the famous Paul Jones to make him one of his gunners afterwards. Captain Jones and his crew bought such things as they wished for of the people, and paid for them, being perfectly pleasant and well-behaved; but there were strong



suspicious as to the character of the "craft." When Captain Jones was about to leave Martha's Vineyard, he wished for a pilot to show him all about the navigation of that vicinity and of "Nantucket Shoals," and applying to "Thomas" for a suitable man, was recommended to a Captain Daggett, who was "just his man," if he wouldn't give him liquor. "But, Captain Jones," said my grandfather, "if you give him liquor, you can do nothing with him until he gets over it—he will abuse you and every one he sees." Captain Daggett was procured, and my grandfather went with them to return with Daggett. Daggett was a gentlemanly, pleasant "old tar," when not in drink; and his familiarity and agreeable conversation completely threw Jones off his guard, and taking from his pocket a bottle of brandy, he asked Captain Daggett to drink with him, which Daggett readily did, and drank so largely at a single draught that he became unmanageable very soon—was very boisterous. They soon reached the vessel, and, though Daggett was very noisy, Jones requested him to proceed to his business. This only brought a volley of oaths from the drunken old sailor. Jones was not used to such treatment from any one, and threatened him, which called forth the following from Daggett: "Captain Jones, who the devil are you?" "I am the captain of this ship," said Jones, with a look that would make one nervous. "I s'pose you are," said Daggett; "and you look to me like some kind of a damned Scotch-Irishman that had to run his country for murder." Jones drew his sword instantly—my grandfather as instantly caught his arm, saying, "Don't hurt him, he's drunk—I cautioned you before, Captain Jones." "Right, Thomas, the fault is mine," said Jones, and forthwith returned his sword.

Years afterward, when my grandfather was acting as a gunner and cabin-joiner for Jones, he often spoke of things that happened while he was at "the Vineyard" at that time, and of that particular matter said, "Captain Daggett would have paid for his insolence with his head, if it had not been for you, Chase." Captain Daggett was sober in a few hours—asked Captain Jones' pardon, which was granted, though not with so much cordiality

and frankness as most men would like—and proceeded to conduct Captain Jones about the Vineyard and Nantucket Shoals for two days, when Daggett and my grandfather left, receiving as generous compensation for their services, Jones standing north-easterly, as though he would “double Cape Cod.” As my grandfather afterwards learned, he soon returned south to the West Indies. Upon what authority Headly says Jones had a brother, who was a Virginia planter, I cannot conceive; and that that brother died intestate, leaving no children, and that Paul Jones took care of the estate for the family “two years on the land,” is to me equally mysterious; when, to take Headly’s dates and Jones’ age as he gives it, this very cruise, in which he called at Martha’s Vineyard and buried his under-officer, was within the two years he spent “on the land” as a Virginia planter. Beside the testimony of my grandfather and grandmother, on which I feel safe to rely, I have the testimony of “Joe Frederick,” who was with Jones ever after he took command of his first vessel at Corunna up to this time. But these statements of Mr. Headly are no more doubtful in my mind than are many others from him of Jones—some of which I may feel driven to refer to ere I close. But Mr. Headly must have received his information from some source he deemed authentic. I regret that he and I must widely differ.)

It may be interesting to the reader to have some little description of Paul Jones, his vessel and crew at this time, 1773. Paul Jones stood five feet six inches and a half high, thick and very stout built, not corpulent, with broad chest and shoulders, and arms longer than short men usually have. His weight was about one hundred and seventy-five pounds. He was very muscular, and it seemed like he could use his entire strength in his sword-arm at any instant he pleased. He carried a long, heavy sword, and considered himself invincible in single combat. I incline to the opinion that the chivalrous Murat, or the impetuous Lannes, would have found full their match in an encounter with Paul Jones in his prime. He met very many in the course of his life, and measured swords with them, but was never second best. His com-

plexion was naturally light, with sandy hair and bluish-gray eyes. He had, at this time, seen much service, having been afloat some seventeen years. In short, he was a weather-beaten looking sailor, even at the age of about thirty. The color of his skin, hair and eyes gave him rather a dirty appearance, and this added to his form, which was the very reverse of gentlemanly and delicate, together with a great firmness of some of the muscles of the face, and a mysterious, suspicious twinkle of the eyes at times, gave him an appearance the reverse of prepossessing. My grandfather and grandmother were not married until some eight years after this, but she attended the funeral of Jones' officer, before alluded to, and saw him several other times while he tarried on the Vineyard, and has often told me, with great earnestness, that Paul Jones was the worst-looking man she ever saw—that he looked like a robber and murderer, and she wondered how my grandfather could ever have any friendly feeling towards him. These unfavorable impressions against Captain Jones were, no doubt, principally owing to suspicions of him. But my grandfather became better acquainted with him afterwards.

The vessel or ship Jones then had was not new, nor yet apparently very old—a fast sailer, painted black, with no name marked upon her. She had three long nine pounders, that could be changed to any part of her deck, and one "long tom" on a pivot, to be used in any direction, with apparently a full supply of small arms of every variety. "Joe Frederick" told me this was the second ship Jones had commanded, and was larger than the first.

The crew, consisting of about forty, as nearly as was known, were mostly Spaniards—a few Portuguese—among them, "Joe Frederick," who, at this time, left Captain Jones, by his full consent; for Jones seemed to use no restraint over his men to detain them against their will. Jones shipped two or three good men at the Vineyard, paying them good wages. "Joe Frederick" remained on the Vineyard until the breaking out of the Revolutionary war—during that he was off. After the war, he came back to the Vineyard, and was married there, as my grandfather was. "Old Mrs. Frederick" I last saw

in 1844. I have not heard of her death. I shall have something more to say of "Joe Frederick," though he was not much of a man.

At the breaking out of the Revolutionary war, Paul Jones left his business of harassing the British commerce and repaired to France—it being understood by Spain, hoped by these Colonies, and feared by England, that France would be forward to help us. But, as is well-known, there was great reluctance on the part of France to engage, nor was the alliance effected for some two years after. Failing in France to accomplish his object, he came to America and offered his services to our Continental Congress.

His darling object evidently was to crush England; for he had not up to this time been a politician, nor is there any indication that he had any consistent views of human liberty and statesmanship.

Although Paul Jones was well known as a daring adventurer, and had baffled the skill and energy of all the British naval commanders on the Atlantic, in all their endeavors to capture him, he still found opposition in this country in obtaining a position in our infant navy; for there were those in power and influence who did not approve of his former business, and still another set of men among us who looked more to family and rank than to real capability; and yet another class, more dangerous, perhaps, than either of the former, who seemed to know no other way to have a good government than to unite church and state, and must have a religious test on every occasion. Paul Jones was not a very Godly-given man; and that spirit of religious intolerance, that operated against him at first, showed itself still more plainly afterward, during Mr. Jefferson's administration, as will be readily seen from the following quotation from some unknown rhymist, and published with great gusto in most of the "Federal" newspapers of those days:

"He passed his forces in review—  
Smith, Cheetham, Jones, Duane;  
Dull vassals—these will never do,  
Quoth he—I'll send for Paine."

After some delay, however, he succeeded in obtaining a subordinate command, and by his consummate skill, his astonishing intrepidity and bravery, saved our little fleet, to which he was attached.

Most of Paul Jones' American biographers tell us the story that it was at this time, and in assuming his first command in our little navy, that he hoisted our national flag—"the first time its folds were ever given to the breeze." And this seems to be generally believed in this, our vast country. But let my readers pause a moment, and consider whether this story commends itself to common sense and right reason. Was this the first time that we had a naval vessel afloat? Certainly it was not. Beside some naval vessels fitted out by the different Colonies, Ezekiel Hopkins, our first commodore, had made a cruise and returned, and was censured by Congress and his command taken from him. Did our naval ships cruise without a flag? Certainly not. Neither could this story grow out of the fact, that Paul Jones first hoisted "the Stars and Stripes," for that flag was not adopted for two years or more after this.

Here, then, are the facts which I derived, many years ago, from those who were actors in that great struggle.

Most of the different Colonies had had a flag, peculiar to themselves, in use long before the Revolutionary war. Most or all of the New England Colonies had one and the same flag, though I incline to think Rhode Island had a flag to herself. New York had her flag, Pennsylvania hers, &c. Had a few of the actors of those days felt as much reverence for the past as I ever have, Mr. Headly and others would not have occasion to say: "What that flag was, strange as it may seem, no record or tradition can certainly tell." I cannot, of course, from my own knowledge, "certainly tell," but I will tell it as it was told to me, on such authority as I deem conclusive, from men of integrity, who had abundant opportunities to know all about it.

I have already said that most or all the New England Colonies had one and the same flag, and I am confident my readers will be able to credit the statement and the description I give without over-tasking their credulity.

The back-ground of "the New England flag" was a wilderness, with an elk—"moose"—looking out, and upon the edge of the wilderness and open land an Indian equipped for war. The middle-ground was open land, with emblems of agriculture. The fore-ground was the ocean, with a ship. Sylvester Norton, a native of Martha's Vineyard, who was a soldier in "the French war," and who saw General Wolfe expire, told me this was the flag used by the New England troops and vessels in that war. This was the same flag used on that privateer in which my grandfather was afterwards taken, of which I shall have occasion to say more.

But one other of these "old flags" can I describe with any degree of certainty, and this was the flag used by our first naval vessels under "the Continental Congress," and was probably the one Paul Jones first hoisted; but he was by no means the first officer who hoisted it.

This flag had a wilderness for a back-ground; the middle-ground was open land, with a house and cultivated fields. The fore-ground was a lake, with a swan sitting upon its bosom. This was probably the Colonial flag of Pennsylvania. Our officers and men never felt very proud under it. The English, by way of derision, called it "the Goose Flag;" so did their faithful, but unnatural allies, the tories; and it even obtained that disgusting name with our own people to some degree; therefore, it was abandoned for "the stars and stripes," of which we never have, as yet, been ashamed. But there was no "eagle;" and it was not until Russia, "the Northern Bear," recognized us as one of the independent nations of the earth, and entered into commercial relations with us, that "the American Eagle" was added to the stars and stripes. Up to this time, the Russian flag had four eagles, they gave us one, and now have but three.

From present prospects, we shall soon be as great as Russia. Whether we shall then get another of her eagles remains to be known.

Paul Jones very much distinguished himself in his first cruise as a subordinate. Soon after, he got a separate command of a small naval vessel, and made a cruise of a few weeks. This was a very hazardous cruise for



Jones. Two or three times he very narrowly escaped capture; but his wonderful genius, with good fortune, carried him safely through, and he returned into one of our ports (I think in Rhode Island) with a long string of prizes.

Jones then obtained command of a larger vessel—I think she was called “The Alfred”—with which he worked wonders. But after one cruise, he was very unjustly sent back into his little sloop. He loudly complained of this injustice; and so importunate was he, that Congress told him to go to Boston, and select and fit out a ship to his mind. This liberty was large enough, but his choice was very nearly like “Hopkins’s”—there was nothing of any great account there.

After much delay, he got a ship that he deemed much better than nothing—I think this was the *Ranger*. He went to France in her, taking several prizes on his way, which he succeeded in carrying safely into L’Orient, (pronounced Lo-ri-on.) Perhaps, he made a cruise or two more from France in the *Ranger*; but I am not certain, as I was never acquainted with any one who cruised with him in the *Ranger*.

Many of Jones’ biographers, as it seems to me, confound his cruises in the *Ranger* with his famous cruise in the *Bon Homme Richard*, and his after cruises in the *Alliance*. But I will confine myself to what I feel confident is the truth, and not assume to settle the disagreements of others in matters where I have much doubt. Suffice it to say, whatever craft he commanded, or in whatever condition he was placed, or however imminent the danger to which he was exposed, his genius and intrepid daring, with good fortune, enabled him to come off with “flying colors.” He was never taken, because he was determined he never would be taken alive. Paul Jones very well knew that the British would not treat him as a prisoner of war, nor yet as a “rebel;” but if they could get him, they would at once hang him as “a pirate.” Therefore, his stern and terrible purpose was, that in the event he could not extricate himself, he would, with his own strong arm and trusty sword, sell his life at as high a price as possible.

He continually asked for a larger naval command, for which, as all now acknowledge, he was eminently fitted, but of which he was continually disappointed. Having failed in his applications to Congress for this, he again offered himself to France; but in this was delayed, and finally disappointed. Had it not been for Doctor Franklin, who was then in France acting for us, it is likely Paul Jones would not have been longer employed in our service. There were so many who wanted office, and so many of our leading men and members of the Continental Congress who would favor the claims of personal friends, without regard to fitness for the office to which they aspired, that even the splendid and overshadowing genius of Paul Jones was neglected. And one of the strangest of all strange things to my mind is, that we ever succeeded in gaining our independence. With an imbecile Congress, and no Executive, it seems to me next to a miracle.

Look, for instance, to the folly of giving General Gates the glory of taking Burgoyne, when, in fact, he did not go out of his tent on the day of the battle of Stillwater—the battle that decided Burgoyne's fate—when, in fact, the impetuous Benedict Arnold, without orders, and the intrepid Morgan did all the fighting and laid all the plans that were used, and should have had all the glory and preferment. Congress learned, at last, they were patronizing an old fool, but not in time to save the Southern army. Nor were we hardly less unfortunate in Lincoln and Sullivan—the favorites of "Old John Adams" and his friends. But Nathaniel Greene—the Quaker Blacksmith—who had no family nor rank to recommend him, cleared the whole South of the British in a single campaign.

Doctor Franklin favored Paul Jones, and for us bought some ships of France, and with three or four of our ships then in France, made out a squadron of some "eight sail." It was Franklin's wish that Jones should have full command of this squadron, but a commodore's command could not be obtained for him, so his command was merely nominal.

Captain Jones' flag-ship was the "Bon Homme Rich-



ard," an old French sixty-four, with twenty of her guns taken off, because she was so old and rotten that it was not deemed safe for her to carry more—she was called a "razee" from this circumstance

Mr. Headly, and, I believe, some others, have told us that Jones so named this vessel, "out of respect to Franklin"—referring, unmistakably, to "Poor Richard's Almanack." Headly also seems to translate the French "Bon Homme" "poor," but by what possible rule of translation I am at a loss to know. I call "Bon Homme" "good man," and to this etymology of the name agrees the story of my grandfather. It was in this wise:

Many years before, there had lived in L'Orient a man known to all as "The Good Man Richard"—this is the English—who was so called because he was noted for his goodness to the poor, and for his many virtues in all the relations of life. He was rich, and, having the disposition, was proverbial for his goodness in all the region round about. While this vessel was building, "The Good Man Richard" died, and the French Government, to perpetuate his name and honor his memory, affixed his name to this ship—"Bon Homme Richard." This ship was very old—had this name marked upon her, apparently as old as anything about her. She was undoubtedly built, named and launched long before the American Revolution was thought of.

A long train of circumstances led to my grandfather's shipping on board the Bon Homme Richard, under the command of the renowned Paul Jones, which, I hope, may be interesting to my readers, as the story may tend to give some idea of those "times that tried men's souls." He, with others of his acquaintance, and "Joe Frederick" among them, shipped on board one of the first privateers that were fitted out in Massachusetts in 1775. They were painting this privateer, at Salem, the very day of the famous fight at Bunker Hill, and saw John Stark and Henry Dearborn, with their regiments from New Hampshire, as they left Salem, soon in the morning of that day, to take a part in that first mortal struggle for freedom.

It was calculated they would make a cruise of six

weeks, though, as it proved, some of them never returned, and most of those that did, were absent near six years. After being out three days, when "befogged," they unfortunately got in close proximity to a British seventy-four—"The Old Northumberland." Resistance seemed madness, and they surrendered, and were taken on board the frigate. This "man-of-war," after cruising about for some two or three weeks, and making other prizes and prisoners, in all amounting to about four hundred, sailed for England, and arrived at Plymouth after a prosperous voyage.

All the prisoners were soon put on board a prison-ship lying in Plymouth harbor. It was then the purpose of the British Government to try them as rebels, guilty of treason, and hang or shoot them, as they might deem best. Of course, their condition was anything but desirable; for, in addition to a violent death that stared them in the face, they were treated with the utmost cruelty, less than half-fed on the very meanest of food, and insulted and aggravated in many ways. Gentlemen and ladies, with their children, would come on board, and the children be directed to call them "Damned Yankees," and to kick them. I will not go farther. O, the poverty of language! The British nation is the most perfidious, unfeeling and cruel of any nation on earth, and I hope to live long enough to see her fully paid, principal and interest, for all her terrible sins against humanity.

We often see it written and hear it said, that the French and English are natural enemies. While in England, and also in France and Holland, my grandfather had many opportunities of witnessing what I consider an explanation of this state of feeling with the people of these different nations. The English children were taught to hate the French and the "Yankees," and to call them hard names—just so in France and Holland. Often, in the streets of L'Orient, did my ancestor see a long string of French boys running after one they called an English boy, and, putting their hands to each side of their own neck, make an effort thus to lift themselves up, exclaiming, "Unglu bon comes so—Unglu bon comes so;" meaning it was good for an Englishman to be hung, or that an

Englishman ought to be hung. These early impressions would be quite likely to continue through life. Thus we see that this "natural hostility" is entirely owing to early education. Better for the world that it were otherwise, no doubt.

Under these trying circumstances, my grandfather, "Joe Frederick," and two others, planned an escape, by taking to the water and swimming ashore, about one mile, and then get back into the country, and then run their chance to get back to America. They took to the water by star-light, keeping together, their escape not being noticed at first. The water was cold, and they had been starving for some four weeks, and were quite unfitted for swimming a mile at that time of night, and in cold water. One of the four sunk to rise no more. My grandfather found his strength failing, when close to another vessel at anchor, and put up to it, getting hold of something to support him. "Joe Frederick," who was a stout, powerful man, and the fourth still more enduring, reached the shore, but not until after an alarm was given, and Plymouth harbor was covered with boats, cruising in every direction. The fourth took his legs and was off. None of his fellows knew his fate or his fortune. He was never heard from afterwards. Joe Frederick attempted to do the same, but could not stand. He tried to roll himself into a secret place, but could find none, and they recaptured him. After my grandfather had held on as long as he well could, he called for "a rope," and was taken on board, and, with Joe Frederick, taken back to the prison-ship.

These two were "put in irons." But what does that mean? I will tell the reader, and nearly in my grandfather's own words, and I imagine this will be as near as any of us will ever wish to realize it. The irons in which my beloved grandfather and Joe Frederick lay for several weeks, were hand-cuffs upon the wrists, and the same, of larger size, upon the ankles. Between each two, or connecting each two, was a stout iron ring, about four inches across, so that one could put their hands hard together, but could separate them only some eight or ten inches. The same of the feet. There was a room about thirty

feet square, with rows of strong irons driven into the floor and timbers, and rising about eight inches above the floor and about six feet asunder, with one or two round holes near the top, large enough to receive a round rod or bar of iron an inch in thickness. These rods or bars being of proper length, about six feet, had a head on one end, like a strong iron bolt, and, near the other end, a hole to receive the bail of a pad-lock. Thus, the irons being on the wrists and ankles, the strong rod was thrust through one of the standing irons in the floor, thence through the large rings between the wrists and ankles—the prisoner lying on his side upon the floor—and thence through another standing iron in the floor, and the pad-lock applied, fastening the strong rod firmly. It is stringing men on an iron pole by the wrists and ankles. One thus “in irons” could sit upon the floor, or on a small block, furnished to each, but the hands and feet were close together. They could not stand, neither was there a very smart chance for stretching. They could lie upon one side until they were tired, and then “whoop over,” and lie upon the other side.

While these two were lying in irons, and the great balance of the prisoners faring as usual, Lord North was induced to change his plan of killing them for the present, fearing his example might be followed by others upon the English; so, after the lapse of six weeks, the irons were taken off these two, and all the prisoners from this prison-ship, and several other places, were put into a prison on shore. This was called “Mill Prison,” and was as notorious in the old war, as was Dartmoor Prison in the war of 1812.

The prisoners were all American, or passed for such, and were seven hundred and thirty-nine when committed. They were not imprisoned as prisoners of war, but each crew under an indictment. The crew to which my grandfather belonged were committed as “*rebels and pirates, taken upon the high seas fighting against his Majesty's Government and subjects.*” This was for the crew of a privateer. Whether all were alike, my ancestor did not certainly know, but supposed they were.

My ancestor became very intimate with one Southern

man in the course of about two years he was in Mill Prison. This was Captain Jonathan Maryatt, who, after the war, settled in Sumpter District, South Carolina, and who lived until within some fifteen or twenty years. By accident, I learned of this patriot, by seeing in the papers an account of a jollification in that State, at which he gave a description of the jollification the American prisoners had in Mill Prison, upon hearing of the surrender of General Burgoyne and his army in 1777. I showed this statement to my grandfather. He said it was correct, and wished me to write to his old companion in suffering, to know if he remembered him. I wrote and got an answer. Maryatt was overjoyed—said he would do anything in his power to see his old friend once more. But both were too old to go so far, or even half the distance. They died without meeting again on earth.

"Mill Prison" was a brick building, some three hundred feet long, about forty feet wide, and two stories high, in a yard of some three acres, enclosed with a strong wooden picket-fence, eighteen feet high, though the turnkey's house made a part of the fence on one side, with a window in the second story, opening upon the prison-yard. At this window would the turnkey often present himself and chat familiarly with the prisoners, as also his wife and children. They appeared to be a very humane and kind family, and very anxious to know all about America. There was not one in the prison that did not highly respect the turnkey and his family. Others, gentlemen and ladies, would often be at the same window, all equally curious to know about America.

My grandfather was capable of curious workmanship in wood, and having a good knife, as every sailor is quite apt to, he obtained a piece of wood some two feet long, two inches or more in thickness, and made a ladle at one end and a spoon at the other, with the handles toward each; and of the wood between he cut a chain of five links, all of the same piece of wood, with no joint, and that could not be severed without breaking or splitting the wood. It was neatly done, and deemed a great curiosity. This he gave to the turnkey's wife, in return for which she gave him a mammoth "plum pudding,"

so large that more than seven hundred men got a perceptible taste of it, for he shared it with his comrades. This was shown to some of the ladies of Plymouth, and there was a great rage for the works of "the prisoner (Chase," for the balance of the time he was there confined. He made many more, not very unlike this first, as well as many other articles, until very few ladies of rank in Plymouth could not show some specimen of the ingenuity of "the prisoner Chase."

These articles, so eagerly sought by the ladies of Plymouth, procured for the prisoners ten times their value in food, (and they were very scantily fed from "the public crib,") the ladies being very generous with their "cold victuals" and remnants from their plentiful tables, and this generosity was manifestly increased from their knowledge that the ingenious prisoner would share with his fellows, though often small dainties were handed him with the injunction to eat it himself.

Many years after and about thirty years since, my grandfather was told, by a ship-master "in the Southern trade," that there was one of these relics in the possession of a gentleman at Wilmington, in the State of Delaware. By his request, I endeavored to find it by letter, but was unsuccessful. Now, if there be one of them still in existence, and I can be apprised of its whereabouts, I will take great pains to obtain it. I will be glad to put it with "The Paul Jones' Board-rule."

I have already said, the fence enclosing the prison-yard was of wood. There was, upon the outside and about three feet below the top, a narrow platform or walk all around the yard. This was for the purpose of a guard; for a strong guard was continually pacing this walk, night and day. One of this guard told my grandfather that his annual income was five thousand pounds sterling, and the turnkey confirmed his statement, and that "he served his country for the honor of it," and without pay. While we can but admire that man's love of country, we also regret that he could find no more honorable employment than keeping men in a loathsome prison, for no other crime than struggling for their freedom.

After these prisoners had been snugly ensconced in



Mill Prison for several months, an escape was plotted. This was done by taking up one of the large stones of the lower floor of the prison-house, about four feet long, two feet wide and less than a foot in thickness. With this stone up, they dug down about four or five feet, and tunneled horizontally under the prison-yard and fence, across a street and under a garden-wall, ten feet high, of solid masonry, with its farther terminus in a gentleman's garden. All this was effected with the utmost secrecy. "The prisoners took turns," working nights and putting the earth dug out into their pockets, hats and any part of their clothes. About daylight every morning the large stone was put in its place in the floor, and all looked as though no mischief was going on. After they were let out into the yard in the morning—for they were securely locked up each night—they would carefully scatter the earth concealed about their persons upon the ground, and it would readily disappear under so many feet, especially where they walked about more than usual, as they did about that time. They were very fortunate in the garden terminus, it being in the midst of some trees and bushes. They found the garden wall of the same height all around, and that one could not pass it alone. Therefore, they arranged themselves in couples, not two long ones for a couple, nor two short ones for a couple, but a long one and a short one made a couple. The long one could help the short one on to the wall, and the short one could help the long one when on the wall, but not otherwise.

All things being ready, they started in the order arranged, in perfect silence, at 11 o'clock at night, when all was still in Old Plymouth. Some eighty or ninety couples passed into the garden, and about seventy-five coup'es over the garden-wall, when a couple of lads came to the wall; the long one helped his fellow on to the wall, but he did not stop to help the long one, who, in his excitement, called loudly after him. This attracted the guard—the plot was out. Those that had not left the prison put the stone back into the floor, while those in the garden endeavored to secrete that terminus. A great alarm was made. Those who had passed over the wall were hastily pursued, and most of them soon taken. A

multitude mounted guard, and many guns were fired into the prison-yard; "but they were probably powder guns," only to intimidate.

Those in the garden were readily taken; but all refused to tell how they got out of the prison. This, however, was ascertained the next day, after a very close examination. Three of those who escaped were not taken until six days, although pursued by two hundred British cavalry. One of them, refusing to surrender at any rate, after killing two of his pursuers with a club, was shot dead. He was a Rhode Islander, by the name of Wormsted. The dead body of Wormsted was brought back to the prison, a rude gallows erected, and the body "hung for a whole day."

One of this Wormsted family did fearful mischief for the British in the war of 1812 as a privateer, and though twice taken and put in irons, succeeded both times in escaping—once by mutiny, or taking the vessel in which he was confined and bringing it safely home; the other, by breaking out of prison at Halifax, Nova Scotia. Two or three of these Wormsteds were not unlike Paul Jones.

This unsuccessful attempt of the prisoners to escape was, for a while, a sore disadvantage to them. The guard was doubled around the prison-yard, and a strong outer guard placed. They were not as well fed, and all who got out were insulted and cruelly treated. Fortunately for my grandfather, his turn had not come to enter the tunnel, and he assisted to put back the stone to conceal their secret work.

These prisoners were not without their sports and pastimes, even under such sufferings. There were several lads among them, from twelve to eighteen years of age. These and some of the men applied themselves to learning a portion of the time, improving the best means within their reach. They could sometimes obtain newspapers slyly, for there were truant boys in Plymouth, who, for a copper or two, would give them papers through the alternate openings in the fence. They could also obtain plenty of bits of slate upon which to "cypher." After the unfortunate detection of their attempt to escape, whenever a group of gentlemen and ladies, or either, were seen



about the fence, or known to be within hearing, this mathematical question was sure to be proposed in a loud voice: "If it takes two hundred Englishmen to catch three of us, how many would it take to catch ten thousand of us?" Each one who had a piece of slate would appear to be mighty busy in solving the question for a minute or two, and then answer in a loud voice. But the greatest sport of the whole thing was the great variety of answers given, no two being alike. "A hundred thousand," cries one; "two hundred thousand," another; "there ain't men enough in England," "Plymouth can't begin to do it," and so on, evidently to the great annoyance of the outsiders, who, I reckon, must have considered that the Yankees were mighty dull scholars in arithmetic.

Sometimes this provoking question would be put in double proportion, thus: If it takes two hundred Englishmen six days to catch three of us, how many and how long will it take to catch ten thousand of us? And after the usual "cyphering" on the slates, the same ridiculous variety of answers.

When these more than seven hundred men had been in "Mill Prison" some a year and a-half or more, the turnkey one day, as he often did, opened his window looking into the prison-yard, and in a voice louder than usual, said, "Come here, boys, I've got some good news to tell you." A general rush was made for the turnkey. "What is it?" "Do tell us, sir," &c. After they had become still, he told them that General Washington and all his army were taken, and that all of them that were not to be hung or shot, would soon be set at liberty. No good to that news, said many. On being asked for the particulars, the turnkey told them they were not yet received, but would be in a few days, when he would tell them all about it. There was a deep sorrow, rather than rejoicing, with those suffering prisoners.

"A few days" passed, and even a few weeks, and not a word more from the turnkey. But the prisoners perceived they were better fed and more kindly treated than they had been. They overheard scraps of conversation, and saw some indications that those about them had im-

portant knowledge they did not wish the prisoners to get hold of. They soon succeeded in getting a good file of papers containing all the news from America for several weeks, from which they learned that the good news the turnkey had given them was a mistake, that instead of Washington and his army being taken, Burgoyne and his entire army were prisoners. Their joy was unbounded; but they kept still as possible, until they got a general jollification arranged.

They had some three or four old fiddles, and borrowed as many more as they could, by the same means they obtained papers. When all was ready, the fiddlers, to the number of some twelve or fifteen, being on the timbers overhead, in the second story, the floor under them being the dancing floor, the jollification broke out with fiddling and dancing, and as they grew more warm, with leaping and shouting, and all manner of gymnastics and every possible demonstration of joy in the wildest chaos. When they wanted more air, because of their severe exercise, they would take to the yard, and enjoy a larger liberty by throwing up their hats, coats and jackets.

Never before nor since, probably, was such a jollification had with a like number. Old Plymouth was thoroughly alarmed—the military were called in requisition—all was consternation and fear without. The prisoners were threatened, but not with the smallest effect. They assured those in authority over them that they would do no harm; but they had started for a “break-down”—there was good reason for it—and they were determined to have it, if it were their last hour.

In their great glee of throwing up their hats and clothing, some of them fell upon the outside of the high fence. Hats were thrown back with the crowns cut out, coats and jackets with the arms cut off. This jollification closed only from sheer exhaustion. Some few accidents happened to the prisoners, as is not uncommon when men get wild and unmanageable. One Irish fiddler fell from the beam upon which he was seated, and dislocated his ankle. All were too busy to attend to it then, but the next morning he was looked to. No help was called from without, for they did not expect sympathy, so the

most ingenious of them in surgical matters "set the ankle." They hitched a rope below the joint and several pulled hard upon it, while others pressed the bones in place, though with some difficulty. "And now pull hard, my hearties, and twist a little with all," said the suffering Irishman, and this was a "by-word" with my grandfather as long as he lived.

No harm was done them from without in consequence of this wonderful "break-down," nor were they ever questioned as to the cause of it.

After the capture of Burgoyne and his army, these Colonies and the French, taken together, had more English prisoners than the English had of French and American prisoners; it was, therefore, an easy matter to effect an exchange of prisoners, which Doctor Franklin did, though Lord North still declined to negotiate with us directly; his sole conditions being, that we should lay down our arms, and give up a few of the leading "rebels." Doctor Franklin was then acting for us at the French Court—a treaty of alliance had been perfected—and the exchange of prisoners that Franklin secured was between France and England. This exchange took all those from Mill Prison and many others. They were released from prison, and taken directly to L'Orient.

Strange as it may seem, although these prisoners had been ill-treated and anxiously wished to be set free every day of their long confinement, when the day came, and the gate was thrown open, an involuntary reluctance was felt by most of them; the thought that they should never see the old prison again, where they had passed so many days and months—never see the turnkey and his kind family again—and soon most of themselves would be separated to meet no more on earth—there was deep melancholy even in their great joy. Some eight or ten had died, beside Wormsted, who was shot.

Upon their arrival at L'Orient, Paul Jones was there, having just obtained command of the *Bon Homme Richard*, and wishing to ship a crew. He well knew that most of these prisoners were anxious to return to America, having been from their homes from two to four years. He also judged rightly that men, who had suffered so

much from British tyranny, would fight with the fury of demons, if once afloat, in case they met the English. He, therefore, proclaimed that he should sail for Boston as soon as he could get his complement. There were several other naval vessels also shipping crews on the same conditions. Captain Jones and my grandfather met, and instantly recognized each other, not knowing what had been the condition of each for more than four years. Their former acquaintance on the Vineyard induced my ancestor to ship with Captain Jones, which was in accordance with Jones' wishes, for he remembered that he was a good shot, and thought that, with a little practice, he would be a skillful gunner. In this he was not mistaken.

None of the captains found any difficulty in getting a full complement of men, and even something more, and were soon ready to sail.

Doctor Franklin designed that Captain Jones should occupy the position of commodore, but the Congress would not give him such a commission—still he was nominally the commander of the whole fleet, consisting of seven or eight sail. The *Bon Homme Richard* was the largest, and was his flag-ship. The *Alliance* was a new thirty-six, built very hastily by these Colonies, for the express purpose of taking our embassy to France, to effect a treaty of alliance with that friendly power—hence her name. She was the fastest sailer of her time by odds, and was then under the command of Peter Landais (pronounced Landy). Jones would much have preferred the *Alliance* for his flag-ship.

And here let me tell the end of the frigate *Alliance*, though it be out of order. She was not only hastily built, but of indifferent materials, and soon decayed. Not long after the close of the Revolutionary war, the *Alliance*, being at Philadelphia, was found to be so rotten, that she was condemned as unseaworthy, and, after having been stripped of every thing worth saving, her hulk was sunk to make a part of a wharf in "the City of Brotherly Love," where it no doubt still remains.

This end of the *Alliance* is upon the testimony of Lathrop Chase, a drummer in the Continental army, and Paine Chase, a fifer in the Continental army, both bro-

thers of Thomas Chase, my informant. Their last reveille in the war was at Yorktown, at the taking of Cornwallis. They never returned to New England except to visit their friends, but settled at Philadelphia, "the Northern Liberties," where they were engaged in merchandizing the balance of their lives. Their last visit to New England was during the war of 1812, or a little before, which I well remember. Though both younger, they died many years before my grandfather, leaving no children.

Jones' command of these ships was little more than nominal, except the *Bon Homme Richard*, especially as to a part of them that actually proceeded directly to Boston. Their crews were almost entirely of released prisoners, as was Jones' crew, and shipped under the same circumstances, hence their excuse for insubordination. The *Alliance*, and one or two others, kept within safe distance of the *Bon Homme Richard* a portion of the time, but not near enough to act in concert with Jones, until his terrible encounter with the *Serapis*.

Captain Jones with his fleet set sail from L'Orient, and took a westerly course, as for Boston; but after clearing "Land's End," he took a northerly course, up the waters that separate England and Ireland. Here he left a part of the squadron, who continued their course to Boston. Being on the Irish coast, he sent two barges or gun-boats, with forty eight men, into an Irish port, for the purpose of doing mischief and getting booty. Unfortunately they were both captured, and Jones lost both men and boats. He regretted he had not gone in person on that expedition, insisting he could have accomplished his object and returned in safety. He did not afterward trust any such expedition to another.

He continued northward, doing some mischief to the British, until he came in the vicinity of White Haven, on the confines of Scotland. After various manœuvres and stratagems, he succeeded in getting clear of present opposition, when he brought the *Bon Homme Richard* to a position where her guns fully covered a splendid mansion or castle upon the rising shore. He then gave his under officers very particular orders how to proceed in his absence, under all the contingencies that could pro-

bably happen, and taking twelve men with him, of whom my grandfather Thomas Chase was one, and with one of his boats, went ashore a short distance. They made fast their boat, where even muskets from the frigate could cover it. The twelve men with Jones were such as he deemed his most trusty personal friends, and were armed to the teeth. He then, in few words, told his men that the splendid mansion before them belonged to the Earl of Selkirk, and that there was where he was "brought up." This was news to all of them.

They went up to the house, and on inquiring for the earl, were told that he was not at home, but far away, naming the place. This story Jones did not believe, and, knowing every nook and corner of the concern, proceeded to search, and soon found the earl, almost paralyzed with fear. They brought him out into "the receiving-room," when Jones asked him if he knew him. The earl answered, "No, sir," very humbly. Captain Jones then ordered him undressed in part, and to bend over the knees of one of his men, who was seated for the purpose, the earl's face being downward. Jones then, with his own flat hand, "spauked" the exposed portion of the earl's person as much as he pleased, apparently very little to the comfort of the earl. He did not break the skin, though the earl's *most sensible part*, at that time, "looked something more than a healthy red."

When Jones was done, he said, in a severe tone, "there, God damn you, this is John Paul, you used to whip. When I left you, I swore I would have my revenge—I've got it." The earl was then set in a chair, where he remained motionless—apparently dreaming—while Jones and a part of his men proceeded to take all the earl's plate—a very large and valuable set—the balance of the men taking care of the earl and keeping guard. They left the earl in that same condition, and returned to the ship with the earl's plate in safety. Paul Jones enjoined profound secrecy upon those twelve men who were with him in this singular expedition. They soon set sail, and my grandfather never again saw White Haven, nor the Earl of Selkirk. This nobleman was then rather old and infirm, very rich, of about middle



stature, with light skin and blue eyes; his hair was then white.

In Paul Jones' treatment to the Earl of Selkirk, I find proof conclusive, that whatever the truth might have been, Jones really believed the earl to be his father. He might have killed him if he pleased. He might have taken money from him. He might have borne him off a prisoner, and required a large ransom for him, and probably obtained it. He might have taken many valuables beside the plate. But why he dealt no more harshly with him is quite unaccountable to me on any other ground, than that Paul Jones really felt confident it was his natural father.

The taking of the plate Jones afterward explained to my grandfather in private, "The old earl shall never whip another boy for not taking care of that plate; I will take care of it myself—it is no more than my share as a son."

Daniel Webster, in one of his speeches in Congress, when speaking of the vast power of Great Britain, said, "Not a hostile foot has ever stepped upon the Island of Great Britain since William the Conqueror." I have shown this little exception to Webster's statement as to strict truth. Paul Jones and twelve brave men did it; "but they didn't kill any body."

Continuing his course "North about," Jones had made six prizes, when he neared the coast of Denmark, and wishing to be rid of them, for they could only be a trouble to him in case he found nearly his match, he put into a port of Denmark, for the purpose of selling them. The Danes did not acknowledge our flag, and, instead of buying Jones' prizes, took them from him, and gave them back to the English. They endeavored to take Jones and the Bon Homme Richard, but Paul Jones was not to be taken, though his escape was a very narrow one. Here Jones lost the old earl's plate; for it was on board one of his prizes, as being a more safe place than on the Bon Homme Richard.

After escaping from the Danes, his course was southwesterly; and nearing the coast of England, they saw many vessels. They proved to be the British Baltic fleet,

under convey of the British frigate *Serapis*, a new forty-four gun frigate, commanded by Captain Pearson, a schoolmate with Jones, though never his friend. There were other smaller ships of war near by—the *Countess of Scarborough* and one other not now remembered. Near by was the *Alliance*, under Captain Landais, that they had not seen for some time, and one or two other smaller ships that left *L'Orient* with them.

The Baltic fleet made haste to secure themselves, and were soon out of the way “in shore.” But Captain Pearson, with the *Serapis*, was disposed to fight. He knew “the pirate Jones” was hovering about the coasts of England, and wished to measure swords with his hated schoolmate. It was a short work for them to get near enough to see and recognize each other.

In this encounter, Jones really had fearful odds against him. The *Bon Homme Richard* carried forty-four guns, as did the *Serapis*, but some one-half of Pearson’s guns were heavier than any of Jones’. Beside, the *Serapis* was new and strong, and built only for a forty-four, while, as I have before said, the *Bon Homme Richard* was an old sixty-four, with twenty of her guns taken off. She was, of course, very unwieldly, and not more than about half as effective as the *Serapis*. Jones would much rather have had the *Alliance* with thirty-six guns, than the *Bon Homme Richard* with her forty-four.

The fight commenced with little ceremony. Jones soon found that to lay off at fair gun shot would not do for him, and purposely run his frigate hard on to the *Serapis*, head to head, just glancing by; and when the stern of Jones’ ship was nearly even with the bows of Pearson’s and close to it, Jones ordered his men, with boarding-hooks, to “grapple,” which they did, until with an anchor and strong cable they made fast at that end, though it was the stern of Jones’ and the bow of Pearson’s. Captain Pearson did not like to be thus entangled, and lose his advantage, for he was as well aware of that as Jones was. He therefore tried a tack to get free, which brought his stern and Jones’ bow close up, so that Jones’ men, by his order, grappled with their hooks. This was very fortunate for Jones. Had it not been for



Pearson's careless haste to get loose, Jones could not by any possible means have lashed them together, "broadside to broadside," without Pearson's consent.

Soon as Jones' men had fairly grappled with their boarding-hooks, Jones seized a large cable with his left hand, holding his terrible sword in his right, and telling his men to help him, began to lash the ships together in the strongest manner. Captain Pearson was determined to prevent this, and calling his men, dashed upon Jones with great fury. Jones, of course, was upon the lookout, and squaring off in a very formidable attitude, thundered out, "Pearson, God damn you, stand off, or I'll toss your head overboard." Pearson took himself away from that spot quicker than he got there. His men also kept themselves at a safe distance, and Paul Jones actually defended his men with his own sword, until they firmly secured the two frigates "gunwale to gunwale."

The reader may wonder that Pearson or some of his men did not shoot Jones. There were two strong reasons why it was not attempted. The first is, it is against the rules of war for centuries past. The second is, Jones could shoot as well as Pearson, and was as ready to do it as soon, and Pearson did not feel anxious to burn powder with Jones personally, any better than to measure swords with him; and Jones' old released prisoners would have relished no better sport than such a hand-to-hand fight.

The working of the big guns had been suspended during the time of lashing the ships together, but was now resumed. Of course neither ship could use but her guns on one side, and these were nearly muzzle to muzzle—so near that those who handled the ramrods sometimes hit each other. "Fair play," you damned Yankees!" an Englishman would exclaim. "Mind your eye, John Bull, or I'll," &c.

The firing was not rapid, particularly on Jones' part, for it could do the ships no hurt, except to knock the guns about a little and knock off the gunwales, and occasionally raise a cloud of splinters from each other's decks. Jones and his men kept a very sharp look out, that Pearson and his men did not cut the lashings and sever the ships. Neither of the ships were damaged "between

wind and water," nor could they now be by any use of the big guns. Both had men in the rigging doing all the mischief they could. In this kind of play, Jones had the best of it; for his men were more terrible, and his spars and yards were longer; still Pearson would not surrender, insisting that Jones ought to.

Captain Landais, with the Alliance, came up to help Jones, and fired a broadside; but, of necessity, it hurt Jones as much as it did Pearson. Jones immediately cried out, "Captain Landais, let us alone. I can handle him." Both ships were often on fire, and as often was the fire extinguished. Had it not been for the men in the rigging, this was one of the safest sea-fights, so far as those on deck were concerned, that almost ever happened—I mean after the ships were lashed together. The flash of the guns would go clear across each deck, and the men, by keeping a good look-out, could avoid being hurt, only by stepping a little aside.

Had the Bon Homme Richard been a new, strong ship, as was the Serapia, both might have lain there and burned powder and thrown shot until they rotted, as to sinking either with the guns of the other. But the Bon Homme Richard was old and rotten, and was leaking badly before Jones made her fast to the Serapis; and thus fast, the strain upon her against the other ship, and from the explosion of the guns, made her leak worse, and it was evident that she must ere long go down.

Some of Jones' men and one of his officers told him she must soon go down, and suggested a surrender. "You never mind that; you shall have a better ship to go home in," said Jones, pleasantly. Jones and all his men, and Pearson and his crew, very well knew, that if the Bon Homme Richard was about to sink, she would capsize the Serapis, and both must go down together. It was, therefore, likely to be a test between Jones and Pearson, which, for the sake of saving himself and men from a watery grave, would strike first.

But Jones had recourse to a stratagem, which was completely successful. He secretly sent his men below, one by one, with the strictest possible orders to be fully prepared for boarding, and at a given signal to rush on

deck, and he would lead them on to the deck of the *Serapis* and clear it. So Jones' men seemed to diminish, though not very fast, until only about thirty were left on his deck. Pearson, supposing they were either killed or badly wounded, and that Jones must soon strike, was thrown completely off his guard. This was Jones' time. Giving his signal, his men were ready in an instant, and with Jones a-head, with his deadly sword, rushed like "hell hounds" upon the deck of the *Serapis*, killing every thing they could reach, and in a very short time would have killed every thing on board; but Captain Pearson, seeing his time had come, cried with a loud voice, "Captain Jones, I surrender." At the same moment taking his sword by the blade, and presenting the hilt to Jones, and with the next breath ordered his colors to be taken down.

This was in the night. The next day evening, the *Bon Homme Richard* went down head foremost. Thus terminated the strangest naval fight on record. Paul Jones took the *Serapis*, but Captain Pearson sunk the *Bon Homme Richard*.

It was at this time my grandfather obtained "the Paul Jones Board-Rule," now in the Virginia State Capitol, at Richmond; also, several other mechanical tools, with which I have worked many a day; especially an adze, with which I once cut my foot badly, as the scar will still show.

Headly, and, I think, some others, have said that Jones did all he could to save the old frigate, and they picture him like one losing an old and dear friend, as he saw the waters close over her. But this is all fancy. Nothing could be done that *could* save her, and Paul Jones was heartily glad to see the last of her. He was greatly dissatisfied that he could not have the *Alliance* for his flag-ship on leaving L'Orient; and now, as his flag-ship was gone, he had the right to use the *Alliance* for that purpose. He was not long in availing himself of this right. He put Captain Landais in command of the *Serapis*, his prize, while he took command of the *Alliance* in person. The *Alliance*, under Landais, had not had a single fight for the whole cruise, nor had she taken any prizes.

## SKETCHES OF

There were two other British naval ships, of twenty guns each, still in sight, to the eastward. The *Serapis* was not in a very good condition for fighting; some of her guns having been knocked about rather roughly; her gunwales mostly off; her decks damaged; and, upon the whole, she was quite out of repair in her upper works generally. Jones ordered Landais to move gently southward, but not to get out of his sight, lest the *Serapis* might get re-taken, while he, in the *Alliance*, would invite the two twenty-gun ships to battle. In going on board the *Alliance*, Jones took all his own crew that wished to go with him, and permitted all the crew of the *Alliance* to go with Landais who pleased—thus making his crew on board the *Alliance* volunteers; and though there was a very considerable change, Jones had a large complement.

In sending Landais southward, while he moved eastward, Jones had a policy. He was well aware that if he and Landais both moved towards those ships, they would be off, and that the *Serapis*, in her crippled state, could not come up with them; and though he might with the *Alliance*, it would be a long race, and he might lose the *Serapis* at last. He was right, as he usually was, in his fighting schemes.

The British ships, seeing the *Alliance* alone moving towards them, and supposing her still commanded by Landais, prepared for battle. Thus the ruse took. The British ships were placed about a good gun shot apart, and ready to take every advantage that number gives over strength, which is sometimes very considerable in naval warfare. Jones rushed directly between them, and opened both broadsides at once; and though both the British ships did their best, one on the right and the other on the left, Jones' fire was so rapid and effective, that in about half an hour they both struck.

These ships were very unwise to stand a fight with Jones, for he was fighting every week, if he could get a chance, and even oftener, and he and his crew had been at it for six hours less than two days before, and his gunners were a dead shot at a fair chance. There was a very great difference in the damage done to each party. Jones

had three men killed and seventeen wounded, and the Alliance was very little damaged. The British lost some forty killed and more than sixty wounded. The two ships were very badly cut to pieces; so much so that they could make but poor headway, until they were repaired in their masts, sails and rigging, which was done while they were on their course southward.

They took four more prizes—English merchantmen—on their way to the coast of Holland, where they came to anchor off the Texel. The Hollanders, unlike the Danes, were friendly, permitting Jones to sell his prizes, and purchase whatever he pleased. None of the crew received the portion of prize money to which they were entitled.

And here I ask the reader's permission to digress:

Many years after, and when my grandfather was near eighty years old, perhaps a little more, and had become an old citizen of the State of Maine, I happened to see in a newspaper a circular from the United States Treasury, informing the survivors or heirs of Paul Jones' men, who were with him at the taking of the Countess of Scarborough and other prizes made on that cruise, who had not received their portion of the prize-money arising therefrom, that it was still in the treasury, and would be paid upon competent proof. I immediately showed this to my grandfather, asking him if he had ever received his. He said he never had, nor did he ever expect to, although he was surely entitled to it, if any one was. I forthwith wrote to the Treasury Department, asking for the necessary blanks for that purpose. I received them, enclosed in a letter, from an auditor in that department, whose name, I think, was Miller. There was no difficulty in establishing the claim, and he received the money, fifty-seven years after the prizes were sold, as above, but no interest, though I thought he was entitled to it. This, I think, was under General Jackson's administration, but am not certain.

Some years after this, happening to see the agent of Joe Frederick, whose widow was still living, though more than ninety years old, I asked him (William Allen, Esq., of Norridgwick, Maine,) if Frederick, or his widow or

heirs, had ever got theirs. He said they had not, and he was not aware of any claim of that kind. I then told him the circumstances before narrated. He made the claim, procured the money, with interest for the whole time, amounting to near five hundred dollars, I think. This, I think, was in Mr. Fillmore's administration; but it might have been earlier. I suppose these matters are on file at Washington, where the doubtful or curious can see for themselves.

After selling his prizes, Paul Jones remained some time in Holland, went up to Amsterdam with some of his crew, my grandfather with the few. He made a little cruise or two out into the channel to do a little mischief to British commerce, but was soon back to the Texel.

And here let me raise a smile upon the countenance of my pleasant reader, of what—among the multitude of new and strange things—my grandfather saw in Holland. The women had fashions in those old times, as they still have. Even the Dutch women were not entirely free from this universal and, probably, never-ending contagion. Just *then hoops* were *their* rage, which are not entirely unknown with us just *now*. The Dutch ladies used very large hoops, and, in order to make an average size from "top to toe," for a head-dress, they used a small red morocco cap, perfectly smooth, and without ribbon or other ornament, drawn closely upon the head, so that "a Dutch lady in full dress looked very like a cock of hay with a pumpkin on it." As to the fashions of the gentlemen in Holland in those days, the deponent saith not.

After the lapse of a few weeks, Captain Jones set sail with all the little force he had, and passed down through the straits of Dover, in the very midst of a host of British men-of-war, and arrived safe at L'Orient. His escape from capture was almost a miracle.

I am aware that the foregoing account of Paul Jones' famous cruise in the *Bon Homme Richard* differs very materially from any other narration of that cruise yet given to the world, most certainly, so far as my knowledge extends. But his desperate encounter with the *Serapis*, which raised Paul Jones to the highest pinnacle of fame, as a man of desperate daring and invincible bra-



very, which circumstances, it would seem, might have been reduced to fixed facts long ago, has been given to the world in so many different forms, and those forms so contradictory, the one to the other, that I feel as much reluctance in giving my grandfather's version of it, as I do of Jones' life and character.

My grandfather might easily have been mistaken as to some exploits happening in this his first cruise with Jones, for he was with Jones in some four or five cruises; but as to the events themselves, I have the fullest confidence in his account of them, particularly so, as his statements, in nearly every point, were corroborated by Joe Frederick, Captain Thomas Field and John Terry. This last was the "powder-monkey" to my grandfather's gun during the whole time he cruised under Jones—was then a boy, born at Annapolis, in the State of Maryland. I saw and conversed with these three for the purpose of satisfying myself as to my grandfather's memory. None of them were certain he was right as to their order, neither were they certain he was wrong in any case, but they were fully certain he was right as to the facts and incidents.

The substance of the British account of Jones' fight with the *Serapis*, which I have read, is, that Captain Pearson was attacked by Jones in a "sixty-four," and Pearson was about compelling Jones to surrender, when the *Alliance* came up, and giving Pearson a tremendous broadside, he struck his flag; therefore, Pearson was knighted.

It was in this fight with the *Serapis* that my grandfather saw Jones use his sword in good earnest, and this was the only time. In their social conversation, Jones had related to him many thrilling adventures—spoken of many times when he had measured swords with champions and with the chivalry of Spain. In boarding the *Serapis*, Jones did not lose a man, though Pearson lost some twenty-five in a less number of seconds. Jones a head, appeared to be perfectly invincible—he killed every thing he could reach as fast as he came to it. How it is that some of Jones' biographers have said that he attempted to board the *Serapis* and was repulsed, and, at the same



time, tell us that Jones assisted to lash the two ships together, contrary to Pearson's wishes, seems to me very inconsistent. My informant had no doubt that they could have carried the *Scrapis* at any moment after they could step upon her deck; but Jones wished to save his men, and supposed Pearson would surrender without a resort to that deadly slaughter that boarding would occasion.

I have also seen an account of this, Jones' most famous battle with the *Scrapis*, claiming to be from Jones' own pen—a true copy of his official account of it to our Government, and said to be now on file at Washington. I also read this to my informant. He said it was very incorrect. That the censure upon Landais, and the motives imputed to him when he came up with the *Alliance*, were all wrong. That he was unwilling to believe Jones ever wrote it; but if he did, it was to build himself up, and put Landais down. The substance of this last-named account of that battle is copied by John Frost, LL. D., in his *Pictorial History of the United States*, and again copied, or Frost copied, by J. T. Headly, in a short sketch of "Commodore Paul Jones," in his "*Washington and his Generals*." Headly, as usual, draws largely from his fruitful imagination, and gives us a most thrilling account, especially of the imminent danger of Jones and his crew after they made fast to the *Scrapis*, when in fact, as the reader can but see at a glance, the greatest danger was passed as soon as the ships were thus made fast; and so long as Jones could keep them so, he and his crew were in no more danger than their opponents. This fact was well known to all the officers and men of both ships.

The truth is—as may be gathered from most accounts of Jones and Landais—there was so strong a spirit of rivalry and competition betwixt the two, that the story of either should be taken with many grains of allowance, in any matter where the other was concerned. Jones did all the fighting, but Landais could claim all the family rank and scientific qualifications.

But I have few words to say of him whom Headly pleases to call "the infamous Landais." Captain Peter Landais was a Frenchman, not of low origin, but of re-

spectable parentage, from the middle class of society. He was regularly educated and commissioned for the French navy, and had done good service for his sovereign. He was about forty years old when my grandfather knew him. He had a strong desire to get fame in the great struggle then going on. If the French and these Colonies had had ships enough to supply every one who wanted a command, probably no competition or rivalry would have come up between Peter Landais and Paul Jones. But they had not, and, as it happened, Jones and Landais stood in each other's way. Nothing was known of Jones' parentage; but his fame as "The Black Buccaneer" and "Red Rover" was world-wide. He was considered, by the great mass interested, as a mere adventurer. Had it been at that time, as it has been since, that men were valued for what they had done and what they could do, Landais would have stood not the smallest chance with Jones.

But Landais claimed rank and influence and authority under a Bourbon, and seemed disgusted that Jones should aspire to be his rival. Still Landais well knew Jones could be trusted in dangers that would appall any other man. This, instead of producing respect, seemed to fill him with a kind of envy—he wanted Jones out of his way, and that he should not have a chance to show himself more. Jones lacked the aid of influential friends compared with Landais; but he made up in perseverance and insolent stratagem what he lacked in other respects, and was generally successful. This Landais seemed to submit to with tolerable grace. He was as yet a high-minded, honorable man, and, as a naval officer, was an average of his time, with a sincere desire to serve his country and their young ally, the American Colonies.

Would that I could stop here, and say no worse of Peter Landais. I must say a few words more yet. As a man of genius, skill and daring, he bore no comparison to Paul Jones, and whether he was willing'y in fault in the affair I will relate in its place, I shall leave the reader to decide for himself.

Upon the arrival of Paul Jones with his ships, officers and crews at L'Orient, there was much joy in France.

The expedition had been eminently successful upon the whole. The French officials and people lavished favors upon the officers and men. All were disposed to rest for a time. Soon, however, rumor said that four or five rich Indiamen were expected in the straits. Jones called for a crew to go out and take them. Landais at first objected to taking the Alliance, but finally consented that Jones might go with her a cruise of "a few days."

Setting sail, Jones cruised very leisurely in a south-westerly direction, watching closely for the Indiamen. They took some two or three small prizes, but nothing that filled their expectations. After cruising many days, they saw land a-head. Jones made for it, and entered a port. This was Corunna, the very place where Jones first started in the employ of the Spanish merchants, and who were interested in all his after exploits, up to his leaving for France at the beginning of the war.

Jones sold his prizes, which were of no great value, but did not seem in haste to be off. He was often on shore—sometimes for a whole day. To his officers and crew there was something mysterious in his conduct. After stopping at Corunna for two or three weeks, he set sail, and taking a north-westerly course, he sailed for some three or four weeks; he then tacked to the east, and, after several weeks, arrived safe at L'Orient. They had made several prizes, but not of great value, which he sold, and he and his men used the money for purchasing supplies. In this entire cruise, they did not meet with a single British naval vessel. They had been gone nearly five months without being heard from, and their friends in France had nearly given them up as taken, or lost in a storm on the Bay of Biscay.

He afterwards, in confidence, explained his conduct at Corunna, saying, those merchants with whom he had been interested, owed him a large sum of money. Upon getting there, some of them had failed and some had died. The company no longer existed, and he got very little of the large amount due him.

He now proposed to sail, in the Alliance, directly to Boston, but Landais stoutly resisted him. He had again got the Alliance full of the old prisoners, who had not in

any degree forgotten their desire to get home. He could not get rid of Landais by the usual means, and resorted to deception. He proposed to Landais to go up to Paris and see the French and American authorities, and if they would, in writing, give Landais the preference, he would abandon his claim. Landais accepted the proposition, and started for Paris. Soon after he left, Jones stepped upon the Alliance and was off. There is very little doubt in my mind, that Jones really intended to proceed directly to Boston. Surely, "the hero of the Bon Homme Richard" ought to have as large a command as Congress could give him. He also hoped for another chance in the French fleets; for they had two powerful fleets in the American waters at that time.

In sailing from L'Orient, he took a westerly course, as for Boston. When they had pursued this course for some two or three weeks, to the consternation of all on board, a plot was discovered to blow the Alliance up, and destroy not only the ship, but every soul on board except two, who were to be off in a boat. I am not aware that any one has ever given this tragical story to the world; if they have, I have not seen it; but I will give it, and the proof I have of it, assuring the reader I believe it myself.

In the multitude that were shipped on the Alliance at this time was one Englishman, in the employ of his Government for this express purpose—for they wished to get rid of the Alliance, that could outsail any ship of their navy—and especially to rid themselves of "Paul Jones, the pirate." The plot was thus: When it came to this man's night watch, he was to put a slow-match to the magazine, and taking the smallest boat, leave the ship as best he might. Fortunately, this man's fellow on the watch was Thomas Field. The Englishman could find no way to carry out his plot, as he feared, without being suspected by Field too soon to succeed. He, therefore, endeavored to make an accomplice of Field, and Field, being naturally shrewd, mistrusted, from his agitation, that some mischief was on foot.

Field heard him say, in a very low voice and with much agitation: "I wish I had an English friend on watch with me to-night." "Ha, I'm your friend, and

an Englishman, too—don't you know your friends?" said Field. The Englishman said: "I thought you was an Englishman; but I suppose you are fighting for America." "No," said Field; "all the way I could get out of France was to ship to Boston. I hope we shall be taken, but if we are not, I can get with our friends easier there than in France." After several other precautions, Field got his confidence and plot, also the reward he was to receive. This was to be one thousand pounds—to be paid to him, if he returned alive; and if he never returned, but had done his horrid work, it was to be paid to his family.

He was to give Field one-half of this reward if they lived through it. He was about to proceed to do his work of death at that time, but Field told him it was impossible for him to leave without his chest, for all his money and clothing and some papers of great value were in it—that the chest could not then be got without giving suspicion—that he knew Captain Jones, and would so contrive it that they would be on watch again before they got far from the Irish coast. So the execution of the plot was delayed.

Next day, Field took his opportunity to inform Captain Jones. He could not credit the story; for, in the first place, he was not aware of having an Englishman on board—none having shipped as such—and further, he disliked Field, as he did many of his crew, and never spoke a pleasant word to him only when in battle. But Field insisted on its truth. Jones, therefore, soon as would possibly seem consistent, and while they were yet within probable reach of Ireland with a boat, put Field and the Englishman on watch again. Field very slyly got his chest on deck, and did not seem to excite suspicion. All looked well to the Englishman. When he thought it the proper time, he noiselessly slipped below, and proceeded to his horrid work. He had fixed his slow-match, and was in the act of putting fire to it, when he was seized. Paul Jones was one of the two on guard at the magazine, and was the man who seized the wretch in the very act. He was secured for the night—not a word was said—no noise was made—and all but those

four slept undisturbed, and ignorant of their very narrow escape from inevitable destruction.

As soon as they had taken their morning repast, "all hands were piped on deck"—the culprit was brought up, and Captain Jones, in few words, stated the accusation against him, saying he would constitute the entire ship's crew and officers a court to hear the evidence, and give judgment upon the prisoner. The evidence was short and conclusive—none but Field and Captain Jones and the other man at the magazine had any knowledge whatever about it. After the hearing, the first lieutenant asked the prisoner if he denied it. He gave a full account of the plot—said he was a lieutenant in the British navy—that his Government, having failed in all their attempts to take Captain Jones for many years, had adopted that method of doing what they could not accomplish by force of arms—adding that he would ask for mercy, but was aware it would be useless, and that he would submit to his fate "like an Englishman." "Like a damned coward," said Jones. The horror and indignation of the officers and crew knew no bounds. Had the bottomless pit yawned to their sight, scarcely could there have been greater consternation.

Captain Jones gave orders, and he swung at "the yard-arm," in an hour and a-half from the time he was brought on deck. After hanging there fifteen minutes, he was cut down—leaving rope enough attached to his neck to make fast an iron weight, which was done, and he was pitched overboard, and the dark waters of the Atlantic closed over him.

The proof of the truth of this tragical story was Thomas Chase, Thomas Field, Joe Frederick and John Terry. These four men were all I was ever personally acquainted with who cruised under Paul Jones, and, as they said, all happened to be with him at that time. None but Field could know the confidential conversation between himself and the Englishman; but the other three heard all the evidence, his full confession, and saw him hung and pitched overboard. Thomas Field was not under Captain Jones in the *Bon Homme Richard*, but was at that time with Landais in the *Alliance*; neither was Field



in "Mill Prison," nor any other prison. He went to France in the Alliance, at the same time John Adams did, which, I think, was her first cruise.

This tragical affair induced Captain Jones to put about; for, he said, the nation that was capable and guilty of such perfidy should have one more lesson. This change, of course, would probably have produced mutiny in his crew, had they not partaken of the same spirit of revenge to a good degree.

Steering, therefore, for the south-west of Ireland, they soon made land, and keeping the coast, they passed up St. George's channel into the Irish sea. In the vicinity of the Isle of Man, he was nearly surrounded by British naval ships, so that he felt compelled to abandon some four or five prizes he had taken, taking only the most valuable articles from them, with his prize crews and the prisoners. He left them hastily and continued his course to the north. But he found the British had taken great care to secure all their coasts against the depredations of the French and American cruisers, and being alone, he again put about, and, standing southward, he passed on the other side of the Isle of Man; and keeping not far from the west coast of England, he rounded Land's End, and making a few small prizes, arrived safe at L'Orient. It is not easy to imagine a more hazardous cruise than this of the Alliance. Besides the narrow chance of being blown up, they were in sight of from five to ten times their force of British war ships most of the time, and nothing but the fast-sailing Alliance, skillfully worked, could have borne them through in safety.

At L'Orient, Jones again found his old competitor Landais, more incensed than ever, and with more friends than formerly, because of Jones' running off with the Alliance, while Landais was going to Paris.

Jones had to yield, and Landais took command of the Alliance, and sailed for Boston. This was late in 1780, or the very first of 1781.

On sailing from L'Orient under Landais, my grandfather took a friendly leave of Paul Jones, and never saw him after. Jones' subsequent history all my readers may have had the same chance to know that I have, with per-



haps this exception: When first released from Mill Prison, soon after arriving at L'Orient, my grandfather was informed that there was a gentleman of his name residing in that vicinity, about eight miles up the river. Taking the first chance, he went to find him, and succeeded. He was about forty years of age, a second cousin, and born on the Eastern shore of Maryland, having been settled in France about fifteen years. They saw each other several times, and, after the war, kept up some correspondence for many years.

By my grandfather's request, the French Thomas Chase kept the run of Paul Jones for the balance of his life. There is less discrepancy in the various biographies of Paul Jones after 1780, than prior to that time; and, to save the reader the trouble to look up another author, I will copy the substance of his after-life, so far as consistent with the information thus derived from the French Thomas Chase, adding but a circumstance or two that I have not seen from any other author. But I will defer this, while I tell how the old prisoners got home with Captain Landais.

The Alliance was crowded with men, amounting nearly to a double crew—though all were “hands”—none passengers. They had a prosperous and quick passage. On nearing the American coast, they saw three large British men-of-war “dead a-head.” Captain Landais was instantly apprised of it; but made no reply—gave no orders—seemed to be in a reverie or stupor—he did not appear to be sick—walked the deck as usual—but they were under full sail, and would soon be in imminent danger from the ships a-head. At this critical moment, his second lieutenant, quite out of patience, called out roughly to him: “Captain Landais, are you going to give us up to the British?” To this Landais made no reply, but looked pleasantly at the speaker, showing he heard him.

This lieutenant had been such under Jones, in two or three of his cruises, and had seen much service. He immediately assumed the command, “and gave orders Jones’ fashion.” Their course was changed to the right, more in the wind—for the wind was from the north—and, by

tacking once or twice more, they fully succeeded in getting "the weather gauge" of the British; and though they made the attempt to give chase, the Alliance left them with ease, and soon resumed her former course. They soon saw the land, and made the entrance of Boston harbor. Soon as they were safe, the daring lieutenant stood before Landais, and said, "Captain Landais, I give you up the command of this ship—there is Boston harbor, pointing a-head. To this Landais made no reply, but soon gave the necessary orders for getting into port.

Captain Landais made no complaint against the lieutenant, though a multitude made complaint to the authorities against Landais. His command was soon taken from him; nor did he complain of this, but soon after returned to France, where he sunk in disgrace.

Whether there was evil intention with Landais in this affair was never known. His enemies accused him of it; his friends could no longer recommend him as worthy of a command, and the reader can excuse or condemn him for himself, having, at this late day, the same means of knowing he would have had had he been a cotemporary with Landais.

After Paul Jones was ousted from the Alliance, he tried to get a command in France, but failed. He came to this country, but we had nothing for him then. He made some large plans for a navy for us, and made many valuable suggestions, which have proved of great use to us in getting up our navy. He soon returned to France.

Cornwallis surrendered—the war was over—America was free. Paul Jones was in France, but his head was full of great schemes. He planned an expedition—to be joint between France and this country—to the North-west coast. This occupied him for two or three years, and he was here once or twice in that time; but the French Revolution was urging on—times were squally in France, and we were very poor, and the project fell through. But France was the place of Jones' choice—his home.

Whether Paul Jones was in France at the breaking out of the French Revolution, I am not able to say; I apprehend he was not. None of his biographers say a word of him in connection with that bloody struggle, and

it seems improbable that one of his temperament and powers could have been an idle spectator. I have not the dates, but conclude he was in the service of Russia at that time, as follows :

Russia, under the Empress Catharine, was at war with the Turks. Catharine heard the fame of Paul Jones, and, through her minister at Paris, offered to give him a liberal sum—not naming any particular amount—if he would accept the command of rear admiral in the Russian navy on the Black Sea.

Being out of business, he readily accepted ; for he had always been in active life, and did not like to be idle. He made all haste to get to Russia, and as soon as the affairs were arranged, and he in possession of his commission, he repaired to his command on the Black Sea.

Had it not been for this instance of good fortune for Paul Jones, he would hardly have been remembered up to this time. As rear admiral, he commanded twenty ships—the whole fleet was forty-five—but he was subject to the general control of the vice admiral.

On assuming his command, he set about putting things in order—for the Russian navy at that time was rather primitive and capable of much improvement. Admiral Jones changed things very much for the better in a short time ; but the vice admiral, a Russian nobleman, was not well pleased with the new notions of Admiral Jones, and there probably would have been an open rupture, if the Turks had let them alone a little longer. But they soon met the Turks, and Jones pitched into them in his own way with the ships under his command, and carried all before him, while the Turks used the Russian admiral as roughly as Jones did their brethren. The Russian admiral was killed, and Paul Jones was but just in time to save the larger portion of the fleet from entire destruction. This fixed his fame in Russia and in all the world, and for all time. He might have continued in the Russian service the balance of his days, but he would not in a subordinate command, and the Russian nobility would not consent that he should have the entire command of their fleet. He, therefore, threw up his command, and went to St. Petersburg. Here he found enemies, but Catharine

could not, nor did she, overlook nor underrate his vast services in his campaign on the Black Sea.

After some delay, Catharine gave him a sum of money, amounting, in our currency, to about one hundred thousand dollars, and he returned to France.

He was now rich. This was ruinous for such a man as Jones. He also had a world-wide fame, and was highly honored by the French Government and people. He took a splendid residence just out of Paris, where he was surrounded with the most honorable company, and where he lived in the most extravagant style. Luxury and dissipation soon did for Admiral Jones what deadly weapons had failed to do. His race in this career was short. He died in 1792, aged about forty-seven years, and was buried with princely pomp at Paris. Paul Jones was never married.

Having taken the reader from the cradle to the grave of this illustrious man, it may be wise in me to leave him to draw his own conclusions as to the truth or falsity of the foregoing sketches; also to form his own estimate of Jones' character, and to decide for himself whether good or evil predominated in him, and whether, upon the whole, he was a blessing or a scourge to his race.

Having had a good opportunity to converse with four of Jones' men, who had a much better chance to know him as he really was, than any of his biographers even claim to have, never having known him, and having enjoyed this advantage until I was about forty years old, I will ask the permission of the reader to take a short retrospect, and show my own opinion.

As to the probable truth of the foregoing Sketches, so far as they relate to Jones only, I frankly say, I have never been able to get hold of anything that appears to me so consistent and reasonable in all its parts as this. This account of his early life appears consistent with such parts of his after-life as are well known. The particular business he was in prior to our "old war," shows the ground upon which the English accused him of being "a pirate."

As to whether Paul Jones was ever a pirate, I do not flatly deny it, and leave it at that. English history and

literature condemned him as such. Many of his own times, both in France and in this country, had given credit to British accounts of him, and even in Russia there were those who were envious of his wonderful powers and achievements, and endeavored to use this against him with the Empress Catharine. This impression, so fixed in the minds of many, was one of the principal reasons why he was always denied a large command.

But does this make it that he was a pirate? With just as much propriety as British slanders of the great Napoleon prove that he was a despot—"a liar"—and the thousand-and-one hard names the British have called that wonderful man. Very many important places in the Spanish colonies were sacked by British adventurers in the same way Paul Jones annoyed British commerce. Sir Walter Raleigh did this same thing; so did Sir Francis Drake; and our own bay of San Francisco takes its name from the circumstance that he sacked an early Spanish colony located there. There were a multitude of these British adventurers of lesser note, who were engaged in this same business; and other nations participated in the same business; and though it is less popular now than in Paul Jones' time, and was less popular then than it had previously been, I insist that it was but an informal system of privateering. If Paul Jones was a pirate, so was Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Francis Drake, and a long catalogue of others of those days, who have never been called pirates.

As to whether good or evil predominated with Paul Jones, his early life and business must be considered, in order to judge rightly. If he had been favored with a kind father and mother, loving brothers and sisters, and a happy home, until he arrived at majority, his case would have been the very reverse of what it was, and his stern character undoubtedly much softened. As it was, he was unsocial; he hardly spoke a pleasant word to any under his command, except when in battle or preparing for it. Then was he in good humor; and the more terrible was the fight, the more pleasantly would he encourage his men; so much so, that it was a common remark in his crews, after passing a few days without meeting an enemy, and Jones

would become more and more austere: "I do hope we shall have a fight soon, or Captain Jones will kill us all."

Accustomed to a maritime command from his youth, which is well known to be absolute in the extreme, no wonder that his stern nature should assume somewhat the character of a despot; still Paul Jones was capable of warm personal friendship, though, from his loneliness and lack of early friendly sympathy, he sought few intimates in after-life. The intimates he sought were not the great nor rich—neither were they the chivalrous, nor yet the bully—but he wanted a confidant; his naturally friendly soul sought a companion with whom to converse and think aloud. I conclude, therefore, that few men of strong native intellect, under the same circumstances that surrounded Paul Jones through life, would have been better than he was.

But there is another light in which to view the character and achievements of this remarkable man. Upon leaving his early business, he applied to France for a naval command, and failed. He then applied to our Continental Congress, and though opposed, after some delay, received the command of *one small ship*. Wherever he was, he distinguished himself greatly. Still, his requests for a large command were constantly negatived, whether made to France or to these Colonies. The largest command he ever had during the war was the *Bon Homme Richard* for a flag-ship, the *Alliance* and a few smaller ships as associates. But his command was merely nominal as to all but the *Bon Homme Richard*. After his wonderful capture of the *Serapis*, he never received any command to the close of the war, although he made two or three cruises in the *Alliance*, taking her more by force than consent.

Paul Jones lived in an evil time for such a genius as he was. Could he have been a few years later on earth—a cotemporary with the great Napoleon, who never failed to see and appreciate such wonderful powers, and to use them in carrying forward his giant schemes—the achievements of Paul Jones might, and probably would, have been as wonderful on the ocean, as those of Napoleon were upon the land. With such an admiral as Paul



Jones, Napoleon would have crushed England, and overrun the British isles in three years.

But as Jones was situated, with a Bourbon on the throne of France and a Continental Congress here, a majority of which favored family and rank, rather than genuine merit, Jones could do but little comparatively. And the greatest wonder in my mind is, how, under all the unfavorable circumstances that kept him down, his name should be known for one short year, to those who survived him.

An orphan, and probably "a bastard," continually crushed to the earth until he was fourteen, and then cast upon an unfriendly world to care for himself—and never afterward encouraged as even ordinary men usually are, until called to the Black Sea—it is very manifest to every one that his powers must have been of the very highest order, and that his fame, great as it is, is nothing like as great as it should be.

Are we not astonished to look back on these circumstances and facts? Who doubts that, if Paul Jones could have stepped into the command of Count D'Estaing or Count DeGrasse, he would have annihilated the British navy, and laid all her coasts under contribution?

But we must feel still more astonished, that a man so continually and effectually crippled in all his efforts to show himself, should have acquired fame—fame far beyond Count D'Estaing or Count DeGrasse, or any other naval commander of his time. Catharine of Russia did not apply to any English or French admiral to help her on the Black Sea, but to Paul Jones, the illustrious commander of the old rotten *Bon Homme Richard*, with forty-four guns!!

How was it, that he who was next to nobody, judging from the treatment he received from France and our Continental Congress, should ever have been heard of away back in Russia, by the Czarina of the "Northern Bear?" Here is the cause: The very little Paul Jones was *permitted* to do, shows what he was, and what he could do, and in spite of all the difficulties under which he labored, *the truth was mighty and did prevail*.

Leaving to my readers the same right to judge that I



reserve for myself, I conclude that Paul Jones was naturally a high-minded, honorable man, of invincible courage and daring. He could command *one* ship with the most consummate skill, or could, with equal ability and success, command the largest fleets, as was clearly proved on the Black Sea.

Paul Jones had many defects of character, arising principally from the circumstances that surrounded him in early life, and which, from the constant whirl of excitement and anxiety in which he moved, and the opposition and disappointment continually upon him, he never fully corrected. But he had more good properties than bad, and could those unfavorable circumstances have been reversed, he would have shone conspicuous as a great and good man—a benefactor of his race.

As he was, with all his faults, he did much more good than evil. Whatever he proposed to do, that depended on his own exertions of prowess, he never failed to do in a single instance.

Our country learned too late his great value; for at the time of his death, he was about to be taken permanently into our service.

As a brave, daring, impetuous and invincible naval commander, he has never been surpassed, and it will probably be very long before the world will again see his equal.

Peace to his ashes—undying fame to his memory—and rest to his stern soul.

Sleep sweetly, brave warrior, mother earth has enclosed thee—

Sleep where Freedom's friends will not dim thy true glory;  
Unconquered in life, though the Briton opposed thee,  
The chief of the wave and the hero of story.

Though thy youth was beclouded, nor hope was before thee,

Nor parents, nor brother, nor sister, to cheer,  
Thou art gone! yet in memory we will not deplore thee,  
For thy fame is extended with each rolling year.

Thou hast fought thy last fight, nor the surging of ocean,

Nor the booming of cannon, can wake thee again—  
Sleep, sweetly, while freemen keep earth in commotion,  
Thou foe to the tyrant—thou king of the main.



FEB -0 1942



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 011 801 080 2